UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.9/1995/1
4 January 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

POPULATION COMMISSION
Twenty-eighth session
21 February-2 March 1995
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Provisional agenda

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Annotations

1. Election of officers

Rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council stipulates that at the commencement of its first meeting of a regular session the Population Commission shall elect, from among the representatives of its members, a Chairman, one or more Vice-Chairmen and such other officers as may be required.

At past sessions, the Commission has elected a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 7 of the rules of procedure requires that the Population Commission shall, at the beginning of each session, after the election of its officers, adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda.

On the recommendation of the Commission at its twenty-seventh session, the Economic and Social Council, by decision 1994/227, approved the provisional agenda and documentation for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission.

3. Review of population trends, policies and programmes

(a) General debate on national experience in population matters

At its twenty-seventh session, the Population Commission concluded that it would be useful to continue making provision in its agenda for a general debate, during which members would be able to exchange views and national experience in the area of population. That conclusion was approved by the Economic and Social Council in decision 1994/227.

(b) Monitoring of world population trends and policies

The Secretariat is carrying out a number of activities in response to resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-eighth session concerning the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action. The Council, in its decision 87 (LVIII) on the role of the Population Commission in the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action, requested the Population Commission to examine on a biennial basis the results of the continuous process of monitoring of population trends and policies, in accordance with paragraph 107 of the Plan of Action, and to bring its findings to the attention of the Council.

The General Assembly, in resolution 39/228, endorsed the recommendation of the International Conference on Population, 1984, that the monitoring of

population trends and policies and the review and appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action continue to be undertaken by the Secretary-General, as specified in the Plan of Action. The request for a report on the monitoring of population trends and policies was reiterated by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1985/4.

In resolution 49/128 of 19 December 1994, the General Assembly, in endorsing the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994, decided that "the revitalized Population Commission, as a functional commission assisting the Economic and Social Council, will monitor, review and assess the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels and advise the Council thereon".

The Population Commission has reviewed eight reports of the Secretary-General on the monitoring of population trends and policies - in 1977, 1979, 1981, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1991 and 1994. Its review of the eighth report was delayed by one year beyond the normal two-year cycle as a result of the postponement of the twenty-seventh session of the Population Commission so that it could act as the intergovernmental preparatory committee for the International Conference on Population and Development. The delay was also necessary in order that the findings of the eighth round of monitoring could provide up-to-date input into the review and appraisal of progress made in the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action.

In 1995, the Population Commission resumes its normal biennial cycle of meetings. However, less than one year has elapsed since its most recent session, when a full-scale report on the monitoring of population trends and policies was presented. In view of that brief interval, the Commission, at its twenty-seventh session, agreed that an addendum to the eighth report on monitoring of population trends and policies should be submitted to it at its twenty-eighth session rather than a completely new report.

(c) Monitoring of multilateral population assistance

In resolution 1987/72 on the follow-up to the recommendations of the International Conference on Population, 1984, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare, on a regular basis, reports on, among other things, monitoring of multilateral population assistance. In the same resolution, the Council requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to continue to submit to the Population Commission, on a regular basis, a report on the activities of the Fund, and invited the Population Commission to review those reports, within its competence, and to transmit its views to the Council at its second regular session. Less than a year has elapsed since the Commission's most recent session, when such full-scale reports were presented. In view of that brief interval, the Commission will have before it, at its twenty-eighth session, addenda to the report on the monitoring of multilateral population assistance and to the report of the Executive Director of UNFPA on the activities of the Fund, rather than completely new reports.

Documentation

Concise report of the Secretary-General on the monitoring of population trends and policies (E/CN.9/1995/2)

Report of the Secretary-General on the monitoring of multilateral population assistance (E/CN.9/1995/3)

Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund on the activities of the Fund (E/CN.9/1995/4)

4. International Conference on Population and Development: follow-up action to be taken by the United Nations

(a) Consideration of the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development

On the recommendation of the Population Commission at its twenty-fifth session, the Economic and Social Council decided, by its resolution 1989/91, to convene in 1994, under the auspices of the United Nations, an "international meeting on population". Pursuant to that resolution, the Council, in its resolution 1991/93, decided to call the meeting the International Conference on Population and Development and, in its resolution 1992/37, accepted with gratitude the offer of the Government of Egypt to host the Conference in Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994. The report of the Conference (A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1) is available to the Commission for its consideration.

The report of the Conference was considered by the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. In its resolution 49/128 of 19 December 1994, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Conference, endorsed the Programme of Action as adopted by the Conference on 13 September 1994 and requested the Population Commission, at its twenty-eighth session, to review, within its area of competence, the Programme of Action and its implications and to transmit its views to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995.

In the same resolution, the General Assembly decided that the Assembly through its role in policy formulation, the Economic and Social Council, through its role in overall guidance and coordination, in accordance with Assembly resolution 48/162, and a revitalized Population Commission shall constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that will play the primary role in the follow-up to the implementation of the Programme of Action, keeping in mind the need to develop a common framework for a coherent follow-up to United Nations summits and conferences, and to this end: (a) the General Assembly, being the highest intergovernmental mechanism for the formulation and appraisal of policy on matters relating to the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development, will organize a regular review of the implementation of the Programme of Action; (b) the Economic and Social Council, in assisting the Assembly, will promote an integrated approach, provide system-wide coordination and guidance in the monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action and make recommendations thereon; (c) the revitalized Population Commission, as a functional commission assisting the Council, will

monitor, review and assess the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels and advise the Council thereon.

The General Assembly also decided that, in order to emphasize the new and comprehensive approach to population and development embodied in the Programme of Action, the revitalized Population Commission shall be renamed the Commission on Population and Development, which shall meet on an annual basis beginning in 1996. It recommended that the Council review, at its substantive session of 1995, the Commission's terms of reference and mandate so as to bring them fully into line with the provision of operative paragraph 23 (c) of the resolution.

Further, the Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, to review the reporting procedures within the United Nations system regarding population and development issues, including a quinquennial review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action, in order to ensure full support for its implementation, bearing in mind the reporting procedures for all United Nations conferences in the economic and social field.

(b) Implications of the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development for the work programme on population

In connection with the United Nations work programme on population, chapter 18 of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, which was later revised by the Assembly at its forty-seventh session (A/47/6/Rev.1), serves as the framework for the formulation of the programme budgets for the biennium 1996-1997. Further revisions to the plan would be required if it were determined that the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development, as endorsed by the General Assembly, call for new or substantially modified subprogrammes. Those revisions would then be reflected in succeeding biennial work programmes.

In commenting on specific substantive issues dealt with in the recommendations of the Conference, the General Assembly fully acknowledged that the factors of population, health, education, poverty, patterns of production and consumption, empowerment of women, and the environment are closely interconnected and should be considered through an integrated approach and that the follow-up to the Conference must reflect this fact.

To assist the Commission in its consideration of these and other issues referred to in the recommendations of the Conference, the Secretary-General has prepared a report that focuses on the work of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, the population activities of which are directly guided by the Population Commission. Time constraints did not permit the preparation of a fully integrated report in which due attention could be given to all concerned units of the United Nations system.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the implications of the International Conference on Population and Development for the work programme on population (E/CN.9/1995/5)

Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 5-13 September 1994) (A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1)

5. Programme questions

(a) Programme performance and implementation

On the recommendations of the Population Commission at its twenty-seventh session, the Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1994/2, requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to continue to give high priority to the monitoring of world population trends and policies, including in-depth consideration of special topics, and to continue to work on the biennial revisions of estimates and projections of national, urban, rural and city populations, including demographic indicators and age structure; studies on the interrelationships between population and development; studies on the interrelationship between the status and role of women and population; comparative analysis of population policies; analysis of mortality; studies on family formation reproductive behaviour and family planning and also on their demographic impact; studies to measure and understand changes in population distribution, including internal migration, urbanization and displaced persons; studies on levels, trends, policies, determinants and consequences of international migration, including refugee-related issues; dissemination of population information and further strengthening of the Population Information Network at the national, regional and global levels; and provision of technical cooperation support in response to requests from developing countries and economies in transition.

The Council also requested the Secretary-General to continue to work closely with Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, in the implementation of programmes; and to further improve communication and coordination among the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the Secretariat, the regional commissions and Governments, particularly in order to prepare the most accurate population estimates and projections possible, an activity in which the Population Division should continue to play a leading role.

In addition, the Council requested the Secretary-General to give high priority to strengthening multilateral technical cooperation programmes in the field of population, including the utilization of technical cooperation in and among developing countries, as necessary.

Finally, the Council re-emphasized the importance of maintaining the scope, effectiveness and efficiency of the global population programme and of continuing to strengthen coordination and collaboration among the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the Secretariat, the regional commissions, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Bank, and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in the planning and execution of their population programmes, as well as the need for organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen coordination and collaboration with Member States, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental and national organizations, as appropriate.

For its consideration of those activities, the Commission will have before it a report on the progress of work in the field of population since its twenty-seventh session.

(b) Proposed programme of work for the biennium 1996-1997

At its forty-fifth session, the General Assembly adopted the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and reaffirmed that the plan was the principal policy directive of the United Nations and should serve as a framework for the formulation of the biennial programme budget (resolution 45/253). The plan was later revised by the Assembly at its forty-seventh session (A/47/6/Rev.1). The plan includes a programme on population (programme 18) which serves as the legislative authority for the activities under that heading. This will again be made available to the Commission as a background document.

The Commission will have before it, for discussion, a note by the Secretary-General on the proposed work programme on population of the United Nations Secretariat in New York for the biennium 1996-1997, drawn up in accordance with the strategy described in the programme on population of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised. The proposed work programme also attempts to take into account the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in September 1994.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on progress of work in the field of population, 1994-1995 (E/CN.9/1995/6)

Note by the Secretary-General on the proposed programme of work for the biennium 1996-1997 (E/CN.9/1995/7)

6. Provisional agenda for the twenty-ninth session of the Commission

In accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure, the Commission will have before it the draft provisional agenda for its twenty-ninth session, together with an indication of the documents to be submitted under each item and the legislative authority for their preparation in order to enable the Commission to consider those documents from the point of view of their contribution to the work of the Commission and their urgency and relevance in the light of the current situation.

The attention of the Commission is drawn to Economic and Social Council resolutions 1979/41 and 1981/83 on the control and limitation of documentation and, in particular, 1982/50 on the revitalization of the Council. In paragraph 1 (j) of resolution 1982/50, the Council urged all its subsidiary bodies to exercise the utmost restraint in making requests of the Secretary-General for new reports and studies and to implement fully the decisions of the Council and of the General Assembly with respect to the control and limitation of documentation.

The attention of the Commission is drawn in particular to paragraph 4 of the annex to Council resolution 1982/50, in which it is stated that the documentation and programme of work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council and the Assembly should be streamlined in order to enable them to perform effectively the functions entrusted to them; that the Council and the Assembly should continue to review the provisional agenda for their subsidiary bodies, together with the list of requested documentation, in order, inter alia, to establish greater consistency in the overall request for documentation and its orderly consideration at the intergovernmental level, taking fully into account the medium-term plan and the programme budget; and that, in doing so, the Council and the Assembly should also take into account the need for the consolidation of items and documentation of their subsidiary machinery.

Further, the Council, in resolution 1981/83, instructed its subsidiary bodies to take urgent measures to streamline their agenda and programmes of work and to bring about a substantial reduction in their requests for documents, bearing in mind the duration and cycles of their meetings, and to report to the Council on measures adopted, taking strictly into account the guidelines set forth in the pertinent resolutions and decisions of the Council and the General Assembly.

In decision 1983/163, the Council requested the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of intergovernmental and expert bodies, before decisions were adopted, any request for documentation that exceeded the ability of the Secretariat to prepare and process on time and within its approved resources; and to draw the attention of intergovernmental bodies to areas where duplication of documentation was likely to occur and/or where opportunities for integrating or consolidating documents that dealt with related or similar themes might exist, with a view to rationalizing documentation.

Documentation

Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-ninth session of the Population Commission

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twenty-eighth session

In accordance with rule 37 of the rules of procedure, the Commission shall submit to the Economic and Social Council a report on the work of each session.